

of Veterans' Affairs and Dr. M. R. Caverhill, Executive Secretary of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia.

The following officers were elected: *President*—Dr. T. J. Sullivan, Cranbrook; *Vice-president*—Dr. M. McRitchie, Fernie; *Secretary-treasurer*—Dr. W. O. Green, Cranbrook; *Representative to the Board of Directors of the British Columbia Medical Association*—Dr. F. W. Green, Cranbrook.

West Kootenay Medical Association

The annual meeting of the West Kootenay Medical Association was held at Trail, B.C., on October 2. Elections placed the following in office for the ensuing year: *Honorary-president*—Dr. W. A. Coghill, Trail; *President*—Dr. N. E. Morrison, Nelson; *Vice-president*—Dr. W. Leonard, Trail; *Secretary-treasurer*—Dr. W. Laishley, Nelson.

Dr. N. E. Morrison was also appointed as representative to the Board of Directors of the British Columbia Medical Association, and Dr. F. M. Auld of Nelson, as representative to the Committee on Medical Economics of British Columbia.

At the same meeting scientific papers were given by Dr. Ethlyn Trapp on "Cancer of the skin", and Dr. Karl Haig on "Shoulder injuries". Dr. A. E. Archer, spoke on "Present trends in medical economics in Canada". Dr. D. W. Johnstone of the Department of Veterans' Affairs outlined the "Family doctor scheme" of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Dr. Ethlyn Trapp, President of the British Columbia Medical Association, and Dr. M. R. Caverhill, Executive Secretary, dealt with some problems pertaining to the Provincial Association.

Calgary Medical Society

The regular monthly meeting of the Calgary Medical Society was held at the Colonel Belcher Hospital on October 5. The members unanimously re-affirmed the resolution submitted to the City Council's Hospital Board last spring "that a new hospital should be built as soon as possible on the Lougheed site, as outlined by the Summerville report". The members also pledged their support to the tuberculosis x-ray survey of the citizens of Calgary.

Two case reports were presented by members of the staff of the Colonel Belcher Hospital. The first was a patient with paraplegia who can walk now after care received under the Department of Veterans' Affairs. He was trained in the control of his bladder and rectum and with the development of active muscles, so that with proper braces and crutches he can now resume his prior occupation of banking. The second patient had a generalized melanotic sarcoma without pigmentation.

Edmonton Academy of Medicine

The October meeting of the Edmonton Academy of Medicine was held in the Medical Building of the University of Alberta, on Wednesday, October 2, 1946. Papers were presented by Dr. C. B. Rich and Dr. W. C. Whiteside, of Edmonton. Dr. Rich gave "A review of 150 cases of pneumonia", and Dr. Whiteside a paper on "Recent advances in thoracic surgery". Both papers were well illustrated with lantern slides.

Vegreville District Medical Society No. 9

A meeting of the physicians of Vegreville on October 16, 1946. Sixteen doctors from Vegreville and adjacent towns were in attendance.

The guests were: Dr. Harold Orr, President of the Canadian Medical Association, Alberta Division; Dr. D. R. Easton, Chief Medical Adviser, Department of

Veterans' Affairs, Edmonton; Dr. W. C. McKenzie, surgeon, of Edmonton; Dr. M. Cantor, Associate Professor of Biochemistry, University of Alberta; and Dr. W. Bramley-Moore, Secretary of the Canadian Medical Association, Alberta Division.

Dr. Bramley-Moore opened the meeting and called on Dr. Harold Orr to address the meeting. He briefly outlined the present organization of medical men in Canada, and stated that the final step in the organization was that of having properly organized district medical societies. These were essential to any strong organization. One of the objects of the present meeting was to elect local representatives and to outline some program of future meetings. The following were elected: *President*—Dr. A. Couillard, Vegreville; *Vice-president*—Dr. C. W. Stephens, Vermilion; *Secretary-treasurer*—Dr. Y. Yoneda, Vegreville; *Representative to the board of directors*—Dr. R. M. Reid, Vegreville.

Dr. M. A. R. Young, of Lamont, member from Northern Alberta on the Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, briefly outlined the progress of health insurance in Manitoba, with the setting up of municipal contracts. He said that he felt some common contract scheme might well be considered for the Province of Alberta. He outlined also the health insurance development in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Dr. Walter MacKenzie, of Edmonton, presented a brief paper illustrated with lantern slides on "Anorectal lesions". This paper was of much interest and of very definite value. Dr. M. Cantor discussed "The use of hormones in menstrual disturbances". Dr. Cantor concisely summarized the use of hormones in controlling profuse bleeding and amenorrhœa.

CORRESPONDENCE

Transfusion in Erythroblastosis

To the Editor:

In his recent article on "Effect of antenatal conditions on the newborn child" (*Canad. M. A. J.*, 55: 327, 1946), Dr. Leonard G. Parsons incorrectly ascribes to me the statement that simple transfusion therapy with Rh-negative blood will prevent sequelæ of kernicterus in erythroblastosis.

As a matter of fact, I have repeatedly pointed out in my articles that simple transfusion therapy is not the entire answer to erythroblastosis (Wiener, A. S. and Wexler, I. B.: *Am. J. Clin. Path.*, 13: 393, 1943, Case 6), and therefore suggested the use of exsanguination transfusions (Wiener, A. S., Wexler, I. B. and Gamrin, E. L.: *Am. J. Dis. Child.*, 68: 317, 1944). In the hæmolytic anæmia type of this disease, the results are excellent, the blood acting as simple replacement therapy, and the infants recover completely without sequelæ. Patients with icterus gravis are not benefited by this treatment, on the other hand. The reason is that Rh antibodies may produce one of two effects in the infant's body: (1) intravascular hæmolysis, which can be counteracted by transfusions, and (2) intravascular clumping (agglutination or conglutination), which is not influenced by transfusions. The blockage of the circulation to the liver and brain account for the finding of kernicterus (Wiener, A. S.: *N.Y. State J. Med.*, 46: 912, 1946; Wiener, A. S. and Brody, M.: *Science*, 103: 570, 1946).

By exsanguination transfusion, kernicterus can be prevented, provided that this is carried out early enough and before irreversible damage has been done. With the aid of routine antenatal tests for the Rh factors and Rh antibodies, it is possible to determine accurately which infants may be expected to be affected with erythroblastosis. Since exsanguination transfusion removed all the infant's red cells and replaces them by inagglutinable (Rh-negative) blood cells, this treatment instituted immediately after birth will prevent the onset

of the disease, or arrest it if it has already begun. (Wiener, A. S.: *J. Lab. & Clin. Med.*, 31: 1016, 1946; Wiener, A. S.: *Bull. Adelpi Hosp.*, Nov., 1946).

A. S. WIENER

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

The London Letter

(From our own correspondent)

THE CENTENARY OF ANÆSTHESIA

The centenary of the first public administration of an anæsthetic is receiving adequate recognition at the hands of the Association of Anæsthetists and the Royal Society of Medicine. The celebrations were initiated by the history of medicine section of the Royal Society of Medicine which held a special meeting in honour of the occasion. An interesting, and to most people unexpected, feature of the meeting was the reading of a paper which gave good reasons for believing that two Scotsmen in Dumfries had performed an amputation on an etherized patient a month before Liston's famous operation in London on December 21, 1846.

This meeting was followed by the opening, by Lord Moran, of an exhibition of anæsthetic apparatus and literature at the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum.

The section of anæsthetics of the Society have held a reception to mark the occasion, while the celebrations organized by the Association of Anæsthetists included the unveiling by the Princess Royal at the Royal College of Surgeons of a plaque commemorating four pioneers of anæsthesia. There has also been an exhibition of anæsthetic apparatus at the Royal College of Surgeons. By a happy coincidence these celebrations coincide with the first appearance of a new journal, *Anæsthesia*, which is to be published quarterly by the Association of Anæsthetists.

Anæsthesia has had long to wait before receiving adequate recognition as a specialty, and there are still some who regret the development. The vast majority of the profession, however, now realize that the increasing complexity of modern anæsthetic practice renders specialism essential.

CHRONIC RHEUMATISM

The announcement of a grant from the Nuffield Foundation of £100,000, spread over ten years, for the establishment of a rheumatism research centre at Manchester University is the latest development in the campaign against the crippling conglomeration of conditions known vaguely as chronic rheumatism. This grant is in line with the recommendation of the Medical Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Health, made last year, that a number of diagnostic and research centres should be established for the study of chronic rheumatism. While fundamental research into the etiology of chronic rheumatism is urgently required, the problem is such a pressing one that palliative measures cannot be ignored, particularly in these days of deficient man-power. It is being increasingly recognized that in its present struggle for industrial and economic recovery the nation can no longer afford the "luxury" of an almost astronomical number of man-hours lost every year because of the ravages of chronic rheumatism.

The news of this grant coincides with the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Empire Rheumatism Council. The celebrations have included a reception at the Apothecaries' Hall, attended by a representative of the Minister of Health, a Government luncheon and a reception by the British Council. A welcome guest at these functions has been Professor J. A. Höjer, chief medical officer of the Royal Health Department.

THE CURTIS REPORT

The committee appointed in 1945 by the Home Secretary, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Education to inquire into the care of children deprived of a normal home life with their parents or relatives, has just issued its report. Under the chairmanship of Miss Myra Curtis, the committee has made an exhaustive study of the problem, including visits to 451 institutions, and its report is as constructive in its recommendations as it is brutally frank in some of its criticisms. Reports of institutions where, from lack of separate accommodation, healthy children are kept in confinement among idiot children and sick adults, without occupation or opportunities for play, reveal conditions that are almost Dickensian in their tragedy. Fortunately, these are the exception, but the mere fact that they exist at all indicates the urgent need for reform.

In accordance with modern psychological teaching, the emphasis in all the recommendations of the committee is upon "the need for the personal element in the care of children" and the necessity for not regarding them as "entries in a card-index".

The problem is a vast one, for some 125,000 children are involved, but there can be little doubt that this report has stirred the public conscience and that reform, long advocated by medical and social workers, will soon be carried out.

INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Another event that has been celebrated this month was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology. Founded by Dr. C. S. Myers as a result of his experience in the 1914-18 war, and a business man who was impressed by the possibilities of applying psychological methods to business appointments, the Institute has performed much useful work since its inception, and it is a tragic coincidence that the celebration should have been so quickly followed by the news of the death of Dr. Myers.

At a luncheon held to celebrate the anniversary, Sir Stafford Cripps emphasized the importance of morale in maintaining maximum production in industry. He was unable to give a definite answer to the query as to whether man-hour output was decreasing, but of one thing he was quite certain from his experience of the last year, and that was that when working conditions, management and leadership are neglected man-hour output is poor. As has previously been pointed in this correspondence, this problem of industrial psychology is assuming ever greater importance in the welfare of the nation.

THE FIELD-MARSHAL AND MORALE

It is not only the industrialist who is interested in the problem of morale. The soldier is equally so. And it was a packed and enthusiastic audience that greeted Field-Marshal Montgomery when he delivered the Lloyd Roberts Lecture on "Morale" before the Royal Society of Medicine at the end of October. Dressed in his famous battle dress the Field-Marshal did not mince his words. Here was no attempt to outline a new theory. In that direct style, now so familiar, he outlined the problem as he had encountered it. Leadership, discipline, comradeship and self-respect: these, in his opinion were the four fundamental attributes of morale. Regimental traditions, welfare, good administration and propaganda were important factors, but merely subsidiary ones. For an hour he held his audience engrossed, and his reception at the end clearly showed that one of the most specialized audiences he can ever have addressed was more than satisfied that they had learned much that would be of value to them in their thought and practice.

WILLIAM A. R. THOMSON
London, November, 1946.